

Snout to 1st dorsal.....	2380
Snout to 2nd dorsal.....	2380
Snout to pectoral.....	1120
Interspace between 1st & 2nd dorsal.....	560
Interspace between 2nd dorsal & caudal.....	460
Length of pectoral.....	920
Length of 1st dorsal.....	660
Length of 2nd dorsal.....	280
Diameter of orbit.....	40
Interorbital distance.....	900

The weight was about 900 kg. It was a male. Two sucker fishes (*Remora remora*) were collected from the pectoral fins of the fish. No external parasitic copepods were observed.

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MARINE BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH
STATION,
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March 6, 1970.

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14. FISHING METHODS FOR THE SPINY EEL *MASTOCEMBELUS ARMATUS* IN MADHYA PRADESH

The Spiny Eel frequents very weedy waters and hides among the weeds or in holes and crevices on the bank during the day. The latter habit is used in catching the eel. At Bhopal, the method used is to dig a small outlet at the edge of the water and cover it with stones. After three to four days a triangular hand net is kept at the mouth of the outlet and the fish frightened into it by stamping on the stones covering the outlet. Another method is to drop into the water cow dung-filled gunny bags with a few holes in them. The eel is said to be attracted into the bag by the dung but is unable to escape owing to the dorsal spines becoming entangled. Pots with holes are also left in the water and removed after a few days, trapping the fish sheltering in them. In north Madhya Pradesh, hollow bamboos with the internode bored at one end are used in the same manner. The eel is also caught with hook & line using shrimps, earthworms and tadpoles as bait.

I wish to thank Dr. R. D. Gaur of M.V.M. College, Bhopal, for his useful suggestions.

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March 9, 1970.

B. M. GUPTA

15. A REVIEW OF THE TAXONOMY OF THE INDIAN FROG-FISHES (FAMILY BATRACHOIDIDAE)

(With a photograph and a text-figure)

INTRODUCTION

During a general study of marine fish collections in the Zoological Survey of India, we had the opportunity to study eleven specimens of Indian Frog-fishes (Family Batrachoididae) collected from the following localities: Mangalore area (5 specimens); Tellicherry (1); Calicut (1); Bombay (3) and Calcutta (1). In the course of the work it became apparent that the taxonomy of these forms needed revision.

SYSTEMATIC ACCOUNT

Linnaeus (1758) described from East Indian seas, *Cottus grunniens* characterized by two dorsal spines in the first dorsal fin. Linnaeus does not mention the presence of any pore in the axilla of his specimen. Bloch and Schneider (1801) included *Cottus grunniens* L. in the genus *Batrachus*. Hamilton (1822) described *Batrachoides gangene* from the estuaries of the River Ganges. Valenciennes (in Cuvier & Valenciennes 1837) described *Batrachus dussumieri* from the Malabar coast and *B. grunniens* from the West coast of India. Günther (1861) described *Batrachus trispinosus* from the seas of Bombay, Singapore and Penang, basing his account on Valenciennes' description (*op. cit.*) of *B. grunniens*. Day (1878) recognized two species of the Frog-fishes from Indian seas, namely, *Batrachus grunniens* (L.) and *B. gangene* (Ham.), the former with a pore in the axilla and the latter without a pore in the axilla. Menon (1963) synonymised *B. gangene* (Ham.) with *B. grunniens* (L.), and *B. trispinosus* Günther with *B. dussumieri* Val.; the former without a pore in the axilla and the latter with a pore in the axilla. However, even though *B. grunniens*